

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A container, comprising:
 - 2 a base formed of thermoformed plastic,
 - 3 the base including a floor; at least one base side wall integrally
 - 4 formed with and extending upward from the floor; a base rim, the base rim
 - 5 integrally formed with a top of the at least one base side wall; and
 - 6 at least one tamper evident lock base portion integrally formed
 - 7 with a portion of the base rim; and
 - 8 a cover formed of thermoformed plastic,
 - 9 the cover including a ceiling; at least one cover side wall
 - 10 integrally formed with and extending downward from the ceiling; a cover rim,
 - 11 the cover rim integrally formed with a bottom of the at least one cover side
 - 12 wall; and
 - 13 at least one tamper evident lock cover portion integrally formed
 - 14 with a portion of the cover rim; and
 - 15 wherein the tamper evident lock base portion and the tamper
 - 16 evident lock cover portion are adapted to be fastened together;
 - 17 whereby the cover may be secured to the base by fastening the
 - 18 tamper evident lock base portion to the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 2. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is connected to the base by a fracture portion.

1 3. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion is connected to the cover by a fracture portion.

1 4. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock base portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock base portion.

1 5. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock cover portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock base
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 6. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a surface comprising a first material;
3 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a surface
4 comprising a second material; and
5 wherein the first material and the second material adhere when
6 pressed together;
7 whereby the surface comprising a first material of the tamper
8 evident lock base portion and the surface comprising a second material of the
9 tamper evident lock cover portion may be pressed together and fastened.

1 7. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover portion by
3 engaging at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion with at

4 least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion and subjecting the
5 engaged portions to heat.

1 8. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover portion by
3 engaging at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion with at
4 least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion and subjecting the
5 engaged portions to radio-frequency energy.

1 9. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover portion by
3 engaging at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion with at
4 least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion and subjecting the
5 engaged portions to microwave energy.

1 10. The container of claim 1 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a crushable dimple;
3 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a
4 crushable dimple; and
5 wherein the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base
6 portion and the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion are
7 adapted to be engaged by nesting one within the other;
8 whereby the tamper evident lock base portion may be fastened
9 to the tamper evident lock cover portion by engaging and crushing together
10 the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base portion and the
11 crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 11. The container of claim 10 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is connected to the base by a fracture portion.

1 12. The container of claim 10 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion is connected to the cover by a fracture portion.

1 13. The container of claim 10 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a tab having a first end connected to the portion of the base
3 rim and a second end, wherein the dimple of the tamper evident lock base
4 portion is located between the first end of the tab and the second end of the
5 tab.

1 14. The container of claim 13 wherein the first end of the tab of the
2 tamper evident lock base portion is connected to the portion of the base rim
3 by a fracture portion.

1 15. The container of claim 10 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion includes a tab having a first end connected to the portion of the cover
3 rim and a second end, wherein the dimple of the tamper evident lock cover
4 portion is located between the first end of the tab and the second end of the
5 tab.

1 16. The container of claim 15 wherein the first end of the tab of the
2 tamper evident lock cover portion is connected to the portion of the cover rim
3 by a fracture portion.

1 17. The container of claim 1 wherein the base side wall includes at
2 least one base sealing thread having a first engagement wall and wherein the
3 cover side wall includes at least one cover sealing thread having a second
4 engagement wall, whereby the first engagement wall engages the second
5 engagement wall when the cover is fitted upon the base.

1 18. The container of claim 17 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 forward limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a forward limit wall,
3 whereby the forward limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the forward
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is fitted upon the base.

1 19. The container of claim 18 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a reverse limit wall,

3 whereby the reverse limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the reverse
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is fitted upon the base.

5 20. The container of claim 17 wherein the base sealing thread has a
6 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a reverse limit wall,
7 whereby the reverse limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the reverse
8 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is fitted upon the base.

1 21. A container, comprising:
2 a base formed of thermoformed plastic,
3 the base including a floor; at least one base side wall integrally
4 formed with and extending upward from the floor; a base rim, the base rim
5 integrally formed with a top of the at least one base side wall; and at least one
6 base sealing thread integrally formed with and extending inward from a
7 portion of the base side wall and having a base sealing thread engagement
8 wall; and

9 a cover formed of thermoformed plastic,
10 the cover including a ceiling; at least one cover side wall
11 integrally formed with and extending downward from the ceiling; a cover rim,
12 the cover rim integrally formed with the bottom of the at least one cover side
13 wall; and at least one cover sealing thread integrally formed with and
14 extending inward from a portion of the cover side wall and having a cover
15 sealing thread engagement wall;

16 wherein the cover and the base are formed to be placed in a first
17 position in which the base rim engages with the cover rim but the base sealing
18 thread engagement wall does not engage with the cover sealing thread
19 engagement wall, and in a second position in which the base rim engages
20 with the cover rim and the base sealing thread engagement wall engages with
21 the cover sealing thread engagement wall,

22 whereby the cover can be placed on the base in the first position
23 and then moved to the second position to fasten the cover to the base.

1 22. The container of claim 21 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 forward limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a forward limit wall,
3 whereby the forward limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the forward
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is moved to the second
5 position upon the base.

1 23. The container of claim 22 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a reverse limit wall,
3 whereby the reverse limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the reverse
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is moved to the second
5 position upon the base.

6 24. The container of claim 21 wherein the base sealing thread has a
7 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a reverse limit wall,
8 whereby the reverse limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the reverse
9 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is moved to the second
10 position upon the base.

1 25. The container of claim 21 wherein the base rim is circular and
2 the cover rim is circular, whereby the cover is moved to the second position
3 by rotating the cover relative to the base.

1 26. The container of claim 25 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 forward limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a forward limit wall,
3 whereby the forward limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the forward
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is moved to the second
5 position upon the base.

1 27. The container of claim 26 wherein the base sealing thread has a
2 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing thread has a reverse limit wall,
3 whereby the reverse limit wall of the cover sealing thread engages the reverse
4 limit wall of the base sealing thread when the cover is moved to the second
5 position upon the base.

1 28. The container of claim 20 wherein the base includes a tamper
2 evident lock base portion integrally formed with a portion of the base rim;
3 wherein the cover includes a tamper evident lock cover portion
4 integrally formed with a portion of the cover rim; and
5 wherein the tamper evident lock base portion and the tamper
6 evident lock cover portion are adapted to be fastened together;
7 whereby the cover may be secured to the base by fastening the
8 tamper evident lock base portion to the tamper evident lock cover portion.

9 29. The container of claim 28 wherein the tamper evident lock base
10 portion includes a crushable dimple;
11 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a
12 crushable dimple; and
13 wherein the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base
14 portion and the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion are
15 adapted to be engaged by nesting one within the other;
16 whereby the tamper evident lock base portion may be fastened
17 to the tamper evident lock cover portion by engaging and crushing together
18 the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base portion and the
19 crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 30. The container of claim 29 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is connected to the base by a fracture portion.

1 31. The container of claim 29 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion is connected to the cover by a fracture portion.

1 32. The container of claim 28 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock base portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock base portion.

1 33. The container of claim 28 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock cover portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock base
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 34. The container of claim 28 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a surface comprising a first material;
3 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a surface
4 comprising a second material; and
5 wherein the first material and the second material adhere when
6 pressed together;
7 whereby the surface comprising a first material of the tamper
8 evident lock base portion and the surface comprising a second material of the
9 tamper evident lock cover portion may be pressed together and fastened.

1 35. A container, comprising:
2 a base formed of thermoformed plastic,
3 the base including a floor; at least one base side wall integrally
4 formed with and extending upward from the floor; a base rim, the base rim
5 integrally formed with a top of the at least one base side wall; and
6 at least one base sealing slot integrally formed with and
7 extending outward from a portion of the base side wall and having a base
8 sealing slot engagement wall and an open end; and
9 a cover formed of thermoformed plastic,
10 the cover including a ceiling; at least one cover side wall
11 integrally formed with and extending downward from the ceiling; a cover rim,
12 the cover rim integrally formed with the bottom of the at least one cover side
13 wall; and

14 at least one cover sealing ridge integrally formed with and
15 extending outward from a portion of the cover side wall and having a cover
16 sealing ridge engagement wall and an insertion end;

17 wherein the cover and the base are formed to be placed in a first
18 position in which the insertion end of the cover sealing ridge is adjacent to the
19 open end of the base sealing slot and the base sealing slot engagement wall
20 does not engage with the cover sealing ridge engagement wall, and in a
21 second position in which the cover sealing ridge is inserted into the base
22 sealing slot and the base sealing slot engagement wall engages with the
23 cover sealing ridge engagement wall,

24 whereby the cover and base can be placed in the first position
25 and then moved to the second position to fasten the cover to the base.

1 36. The container of claim 35, wherein the base sealing slot has a
2 reverse limit wall and the cover sealing ridge has a reverse limit wall, whereby
3 movement of the cover and base back to the first position is inhibited after the
4 cover and base have been placed in the second position from the first
5 position.

1 37. The container of claim 36, wherein the base sealing slot has a
2 forward limit wall and the cover sealing ridge has a forward limit wall.

1 38. The container of claim 35 wherein the base includes a tamper
2 evident lock base portion integrally formed with a portion of the base rim;
3 wherein the cover includes a tamper evident lock cover portion
4 integrally formed with a portion of the cover rim; and

5 wherein the tamper evident lock base portion and the tamper
6 evident lock cover portion are adapted to be fastened together;

7 whereby the cover may be secured to the base by fastening the
8 tamper evident lock base portion to the tamper evident lock cover portion.

9 39. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock base
10 portion includes a crushable dimple;

11 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a
12 crushable dimple; and

13 wherein the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base
14 portion and the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion are
15 adapted to be engaged by nesting one within the other;

16 whereby the tamper evident lock base portion may be fastened
17 to the tamper evident lock cover portion by engaging and crushing together
18 the crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock base portion and the
19 crushable dimple of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 40. The container of claim 39 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is connected to the base by a fracture portion.

1 41. The container of claim 39 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion is connected to the cover by a fracture portion.

1 42. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock base portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock cover
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock cover portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock base portion.

1 43. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock cover
2 portion includes an adhesive-bearing surface, whereby the tamper evident
3 lock cover portion is adapted to be fastened to the tamper evident lock base
4 portion by pressing at least a portion of the tamper evident lock base portion
5 against the adhesive-bearing surface of the tamper evident lock cover portion.

1 44. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a surface comprising a first material;
3 wherein the tamper evident lock cover portion includes a surface
4 comprising a second material; and

5 wherein the first material and the second material adhere when
6 pressed together;

7 whereby the surface comprising a first material of the tamper
8 evident lock base portion and the surface comprising a second material of the
9 tamper evident lock cover portion may be pressed together and fastened.

1 45. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes at least one tensioning protrusion adapted to be located
3 between the tamper evident lock base portion and the tamper evident cover
4 portion when the tamper evident lock portion and the tamper evident cover
5 portion are fastened together.

1 46. The container of claim 38 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion includes a means for providing tension between the tamper evident
3 lock base portion and the tamper evident cover portion when the tamper
4 evident lock portion and the tamper evident cover portion are fastened
5 together.

1 47. A method of using a container, comprising:

- 2 (a) providing a base formed of thermoformed plastic, the
3 base including a floor; at least one base side wall integrally formed with and
4 extending upward from the floor; a base rim, the base rim integrally formed
5 with a top of the at least one base side wall; and at least one tamper evident
6 lock base portion integrally formed with a portion of the base;
- 7 (b) providing a cover formed of thermoformed plastic, the
8 cover including a ceiling; at least one cover side wall integrally formed with
9 and extending downward from the ceiling; a cover rim, the cover rim integrally
10 formed with the bottom of the at least one cover side wall; and at least one
11 tamper evident lock cover portion integrally formed with a portion of the cover,
12 wherein the tamper evident lock base portion and the tamper evident lock
13 cover portion are adapted to be engaged and fastened together;

14 (c) placing the base on the cover whereby the rim of the
15 base engages the rim of the cover;
16 (d) engaging together the tamper evident lock base portion
17 and the tamper evident lock cover portion; and
18 (e) fastening together the engaged tamper evident lock base
19 portion and tamper evident lock cover portion;
20 thereby securing the cover to the base and closing the
21 container.

1 48. The method of claim 47 wherein the tamper evident lock base
2 portion is connected to the base by a base fracture portion, wherein the
3 tamper evident lock cover portion is connected to the cover by a cover
4 fracture portion, and further comprising the steps of
5 (f) breaking the base fracture portion and the cover fracture
6 portion; and
7 (e) disengaging the rim of the cover from the rim of the base
8 thereby removing the cover from the base and opening the
9 container.